



## Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Pavel Kubíček

Title: The European Union - Iran Relations: Indirect Outcomes of the Nuclear Agreement Negotiations

Programme/year: International Security Studies/2024

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Jaroslav Weinfurter, Ph.D.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
<b>Major Criteria</b>			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	8
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	18
<i>Total</i>		<b>80</b>	46
<b>Minor Criteria</b>			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	4
	Formal requirements	5	4
<i>Total</i>		<b>20</b>	16
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>	62



## Evaluation

### Major criteria:

- Research questions are clearly stated, but the broader research problem (i.e. why is the RQ relevant and why it must be pursued) is not fully explicated.
- Theoretical framework is established, but is not carefully integrated and adapted/geared towards operationalisation.
- Research design (methodology) is poorly assembled and misconnects with the author's stated objectives. The author's analysis is not guided by theory and/or methodology.

### Minor criteria:

- All stylistic and formal aspects meet the standards expected for work at this level of study. The work's use of literature is extensive (although not exhaustive) and sources used are relevant, although the use of internet sources might be disproportionately high. Stylistic and grammatical issues are occasionally present.

### Assessment of plagiarism:

Turnitin analysis shows a 27% match. Upon closer inspection, identified sections, for the most part, pick out the external literary sources, which are appropriately referenced by the author.

### Overall evaluation:

Mr Kubíček's work sets out to explore the secondary effects of the security (infra-)structures laid down under the JCPOA framework between Iran and Western powers, especially the EU. Specifically, the thesis asks the following questions:

- What are the indirect effects of the negotiations between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Nuclear Deal?
- How do these negotiations affect the actors mentioned?



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Here, the thesis identifies and promises to tackle an important topic, but, while offering insight into the various areas of EU-Iran cooperation (sections 3.3.2-3.3.5) and doing a good job of outlining the processes that led to JCPOA, the analytical, conceptual/theoretical and methodological framings it develops are problematic and, ultimately, inoperable (besides being left unoperationalised by the author for the purposes of his own subsequent empirical analysis).

With regard to theory, the text is very unclear about the actual meaning of (security) structures (or about the particular interpretation which the author chooses) and continually oscillates between “patterns” (of amity and enmity used in RSCT), Giddens’s “structuration” (i.e. rules and resources) and Sewell’s “transposable schemes”. This not only produces a degree of confusion, but also internal tensions within the work’s analytical framework. How can, for instance, Sewell’s conception of structure be operationalised within the framework of RSCT, given that each outlook interprets structures differently? Shouldn’t this be addressed/developed in section 2.1.2?

Moreover, while “transposability” of structures appears to be central to the author’s argument, the work merely introduces the notion without either exploring it in detail or deriving key methodological and analytical implications from it. In fact, the author spends time on theoretical positions that are not necessary (e.g. Giddens’s structuration and its limitations) instead of investing time and space into developing and strengthening those elements that are needed for the analysis.

Methodologically, then, the thesis adopts a very generic and confused (why bring up constructivism?) template for analysis which in the end completely misconnects with author’s stated objectives that should revolve around structural analysis, as highlighted in the theoretical section. In this sense, having the methodological section precede the theoretical section is not a fruitful approach to logically organising an argument.

However, these problems are fairly contained to the first half of the thesis, since as we move to the analytical section, RSCT, transposability of structures and structural analysis itself disappear altogether. Why does the thesis go through the trouble of developing a theoretical apparatus if it ends up not reflecting it in research design and not applying it as a guide for empirical analysis? At the very least, the \*language\* of the author’s theory should permeate his analysis, e.g. by interpreting EU’s Neighborhood Policy through RSCT, or by showing the transposability of structures in sections 3.3.2-3.3.5.



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As it stands, if the theoretical and methodological sections of the thesis were to be removed, this would have no impact for the author's empirical analysis which, in return, unfolds in a thoroughly unguided and nearly random manner.

**Suggested grade:**

D (62%)

**Signature:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'J. W. S.', written in a cursive style.